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February 6, 2025

The Honorable Claudia Wilken
1301 Clay Street
Oakland, CA 94612

CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT
NORTH DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA
OAKLAND OFFICE

d-20-3919-cw

Dear Judge Wilken,

I am writing to you on behalf of the NCAA Division 1 Swimming Community and their families regarding the new roster caps.

My son, Colin Parker, left our home in the midwest to attend school 1,351 miles away at the University of Utah after being recruited to their Men's Swimming program. He did have other choices, much closer to home, but he felt like he fit in with this team and this environment the best. He is currently finishing his sophomore year on the swim team and has recently been told that he will more than likely not be able to continue on the team next season due to the new roster caps. Moving across the country to pursue his education and continue participating in the sport he loves was not a decision he took lightly. He knew he would miss out on a lot of family things, the most recent being his grandfather passing away and me, his mother, being diagnosed with stage 3 cancer and getting ready to undergo treatments. He was willing to make these sacrifices with the promised opportunity of receiving an excellent education and the continuation of his swimming career to help him reach his personal best.

Over the past two years he has bonded with his teammates and built a life in Salt Lake City that he is proud of. The coaching staff predicted that he would hit his stride and be his best into his junior and senior years and now this opportunity is being wrongfully taken from him.

If Colin had not been given this opportunity to swim, he would never have even looked at moving out of state as there are wonderful educational opportunities available to him here at home, but he wanted to continue his swimming journey and see what he could become.

I am unsure if you are aware of the scholarly research that has been published regarding the mental health of Division 1 athletes, but it is alarming at how many athletes suffer from depression, anxiety, and suicidal thoughts due to the pressure to be a good student and a good athlete. These athletes identify as swimmers, and taking that identity away from them makes me fearful of how their mental health may hold up. An article by Orlins, et al (2024) summarizes that there are trends indicating worsening mental health among student-athletes, with increased rates of mental exhaustion, anxiety, and depression. The article goes on to state that: "There is a significant lack of research on suicide prevention interventions specifically for student-athlete" It is a shame and unfathomable to cut these athletes futures short after already committing so much of their life to the sport they love.

I would implore you to consider a grandfather clause for all student athletes and not allow the roster limitations to go into effect until the 2028-2029 season where all of the athletes will be knowledgeable to the roster size at the very beginning of their Division 1 athlete careers instead of being blindsided inappropriately.

Sincerely,



Bridget K. Parker

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Indianapolis, IN 46268

Referenced article: Orlins, E. R., Slack, A. J., Essel, B., & Chatfield, S. L. (2024). Suicide and suicidality among collegiate student-athletes: A scoping review. *Journal of American College Health*, 1–11.

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